

IRAQI DESTINY

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**Schoomaker
visits 101st
troops in Mosul**

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Commentary

Newcomer sees freedom as root of all hope

by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th PAD

This is a wasteland," I said to a fellow private while standing on a ledge overlooking a vast, barren field of rubble and trash in Southern Mosul. "There's no hope here."

Last week I arrived, after a five-day venture from Fort Campbell, in Mosul. Having never been outside the United States, perhaps it was merely culture shock to see an elderly man push a young man on a wheelchair across a hectic highway. Perhaps it was merely culture shock to see this elderly man use the handicapped man as a ploy to receive donations from the vehicles he made stop.

"This is a wasteland," I said under my breath. "There's simply no hope here."

As my first day in Mosul waned, I found my sentiments toward the city grew only more cynical. I rode around town with a civil affairs unit, a group designed to help ease the minds and spirits of civilians in a military occupation by offering direct assistance.

We rode to the fuel district, where two civil affairs officers overlooked the handling of fuel by local distributors. Most of the day was spent there. At lunchtime, I was sitting on a bench, opening an MRE when a boy walked up to me and pointed at my meal. I didn't know what he wanted to know, so I smiled and gave a thumbs up. A sergeant then walked up to us and told the boy to go away.

"He wants your food," the sergeant said. "You have to know how to tell them to go away."

Suddenly another boy came running up to me. This boy didn't want my meal; he wanted to sell me knives.

"Beggars and sellers," I said. "Hopeless."

I got back in the vehicle with the private and we headed through town again. I sat with my feet by the door, my rifle pointed out. A sadness crossed through me.

My sadness turned to anger. Why can't these damn people just take care of themselves? Why can't I just live my life in America as an American, riding my Ford Ranger to a Friday night movie with my girlfriend? Why didn't they all just revolt against Saddam through the power of sheer numbers?

My anger turned to despair. The view outside my door did not match that which I had seen in the news or in a movie. It's far worse. The reality is that Mosul is painted with demolished buildings, shattered windows, cracking walls, and citizens whose eyes have grown accustomed to these sights.

Another reality, more painful even, is that Mosul is an infinitely more stable city than many others.

Our vehicle stopped at building where a water well was being renovated. After trying to learn some common Arabic phrases, I walked to a ledge overlooking a vast, barren field of rubble and garbage.

I was joined by the private I'd spent the day with. He was a reservist from Texas and appeared to be about the same age as

me. We hadn't spoken much all day.

"This is a wasteland," I told him.

"There's no hope here."

We drank our thirty-three cent Pepsis for a moment, until he responded with, "There's hope."

He pointed down below the ledge at an Iraqi man standing alone, welding a pipe, only a battered brick fence separating him from the vast, barren field of rubble.

"He's got hope," the private said, "because he needs hope. He's probably got a wife and 13 kids. Hope keeps them alive. We're not feeding his children, but we're giving him the freedom to weld that pipe without Saddam ordering him to build a palace for him."

I thought for a while.

"But look around," I said. "Look at this place. There's no way we can fix this place up."

The man continued to weld.

"No," the private said. "We can't. But they can."

That night, I laid in bed and listened to music. I read a book. I wrote a letter to my girlfriend. I turned off the lights. I tossed. I turned. I flipped the pillow to the cool side.

I was searching for a thought to give me comfort in my sleep. Unable to find it, I crept into an uneasy slumber.

I still can't find that thought, nestled somewhere between my soul and my spirit. When I meet that private again, I won't know what to say except, "Maybe you're right."

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Iraqi Destiny

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Army Chief of Staff praises 101st, local government leaders in Mosul

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

Just three weeks after being sworn in as the 35th U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker met with Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Mosul Interim Mayor Ghanim al-Basso Thursday in his first trip to Iraq as the Army's top soldier.

The former captain of the University of Wyoming football team was all smiles as he toured Mosul, applauding Iraq's second largest city as "an emerging model to a civil society."

Schoomaker had especially kind words for the work of al-Basso, himself a former Iraqi general who fought against the regime after several of his family members were killed under the orders of Saddam Hussein after they were suspected of helping organize a failed coup.

"Mr. Mayor, it is a great honor to be here. This is my first visit to an emerging Iraq," he told al-Basso during a 20-minute summit at the mayor's downtown office. "It's obvious that your leadership is an important part of (Mosul's) success."

Al-Basso pledged that his work would continue during his 20-minute meeting with Schoomaker and Petraeus. "We assure you that we will do our best to achieve your goals."

After meeting with the interim mayor, Petraeus and Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 2nd Brigade, escorted the Army Chief of Staff through the streets of Mosul, stopping at several key points of interest.

Petraeus highlighted the Mosul courthouse, nearly destroyed by looters, which is currently undergoing extensive renovations with the help of 101st Airborne discretionary funds.

The visit to Mosul marked an introduction, or re-introduction, for Schoomaker

to the 101st as the new Army Chief of Staff. Schoomaker is the first Chief of Staff in the Army's 228 year history to come out of retirement. Shortly after landing at the 101st airfield in Mosul from Baghdad, Schoomaker pinned on several purple hearts and bronze stars on a group of combat tested "Screaming Eagles."

The division has operated out of Mosul since April, establishing elections on May 5, just weeks after the fall of Saddam.

The division has been responsible for apprehending several of Saddam's top officials, including Uday and Qusay Hussein.

"I am just extremely proud of what they have accomplished and what they continue to accomplish," Schoomaker said of the 101st soldiers. "I'm proud of the tremendous sacrifices they have made and their families have made."

Schoomaker ate lunch at the division's main compound, a converted Saddam palace, before flying back to Baghdad.

V Corps Commander visits the 101st

by Spc. Joshua Hutcheson
101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.) PAO

Leaders of the coalition in Northern Iraq met with Sunni leaders in the Nineveh Province sheik community Saturday to discuss progress in the region.

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commander, V Corps, traveled from Baghdad to attend meetings with Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and other leaders of the division, in Mosul.

The visit followed up on ground work laid during a

July visit by Gen. John Abizaid, commander, United States Central Command.

Sanchez arrived at Mosul Airfield, where he briefly spoke to Albanian soldiers. He gave them words of encouragement and thanked them for the job they did during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"There's no doubt that you are well trained and will be able to accomplish any mission," he said to the soldiers. "It's good to have you here operating as part of the coalition."

After his talk with the Albanian troops, Sanchez



Spc. Joshua Hutcheson

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commander, V Corps, speaks to Albanian soldiers at the Mosul airfield during a visit to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Saturday.

See SANCHEZ, Page 5

Turkish energy company agrees to deal

Iraq to purchase 50 megawatts per day

Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler
101st Abn. Div. (AASlt.) PAO

Iraq took one step closer to regaining electrical stability at an Aug. 25 meeting facilitated by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Dr. Karim, Iraqi Director, Commission of Electricity, negotiated the purchase of an additional 50 megawatts of electricity per day from Turkish Karadeniz Energy Company, a Turkish electrical company.

The purchase adds extra power, critical to the country while its electrical infrastructure is being repaired. Electrical power substations were a key target of sabotage during the war. Additionally, looting after the war left many structures in disrepair.

According to Maj. Roosevelt Samuel, 101st Airborne Division assistant division engineer, Iraq is operating at a greater-than

35 percent electricity deficit. Parts of the country experience power outages of up to 12-hours a day. The purchase of the extra wattage brings the country closer to the goal of 252 megawatts a day, which will allow a predictable three-hours on, three-hours off schedule for electricity throughout Iraq.

"There is a greater than 35 percent energy deficit throughout Iraq," Samuel said. "This long-standing deficit is largely due to the condition of the existing electrical infrastructure, and also partly due to looting that occurred after the war."

The majority of the damage affected the power plants that distribute power throughout the country, according to Samuel.

The purchase of the 50 megawatts from Turkey augments and supplements the existing production of power until those "crippling" structures can be repaired.

Samuel said the agreement reached at the Aug. 25 meeting is set to be finalized Aug. 27 in Baghdad. The power will begin to flow no later than 14 days after the agreement is signed.

"This will raise the standard for the Iraqi people," Samuel said. "Currently, most

people in Iraq spend about 12 hours a day without power. This will bring us closer to our goal of a predictable three-hours on, three-hours off power schedule throughout the country."

Coalition Provision Authority Deputy Director of Infrastructure Stephen Browning, and Senior Advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, Gary Vogler, were also in attendance.

Iraq has never had a grid that supported electricity "24-7," according to Samuel. "Even if I could repair every power plant in Iraq, there would still be a 35 percent deficit," he said. "What is going to have to happen is not only refurbishment of existing infrastructure, but a complete expansion of the power generation capability to provide full-time power for the people of Iraq. That is probably at least five years down the road."

"Iraq, with the exception of Baghdad, has never had 24-7 power. But one day, they will be able to do that," Samuel said. "We will continue to peruse other avenues for purchasing the power from other countries. And we will continue to assist in the repair of the existing infrastructure."

Courthouse up, running with recent renovations

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

With more than a quarter of a million dollars in funding recently approved by the Coalition Provisional Authority, rebuilding efforts on the South Mosul Courthouse are progressing "nicely" and should be completed within 90 days, according to Lt. Col. Rich Whitaker of Tullahoma, Tenn., 101st Staff Judge Advocate.

The project initially received just over \$40,000 for the project from the CPA before the remaining money was finalized. Around \$85,000 of additional support was obtained in the project's

early stages from the discretionary funds of Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne.

The additional financing, according to Whitaker, was "too slow" in arriving. Earlier this month, Lt. Col. Richard Ott of the 926th Engineering Group awarded a contract for the project to a local construction company but could not finalize the size of the contract due to funding uncertainties from the CPA.

The division's top lawyer was quick to praise the local judges for maintaining the local courts in the last several months, even though the court-



Pfc. Thomas Day

See COURT, Page 7

A defendant stands in front of a Mosul Court of Law.

101st-sponsored clinic opens in Zumar

by Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler
101st Abn. Div. (AAst.) PAO

With a traditional "snip" of a ribbon, the village of Zumar opened its newly refurbished clinic Aug. 26.

Before its restoration, the Zumar Primary Health Clinic was in disrepair, according to 1st Lt. Michael Lefler, executive officer, Battery B, 3 Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and project officer for the clinic refurbishment.

"The clinic was falling apart," Lefler said. "The walls were cracked, the foundation was separating from the rest of the building, and there was very little workable space inside."

Lefler and the doctors who work in the clinic prioritized the clinic's needs. "My first priority was structural," Lefler said. "They needed electricity, they needed fully functional plumbing, and they needed hand washing stations in all of the treatment rooms. After that we were able to worry about furniture."

While the Army doesn't actually lay hands on the buildings, they determine the needs of the building, and then hire contractors to come in and do the necessary repairs.

The repairs for this clinic cost about \$9,300. "There is no way you could get this amount of work done in the U.S. for this price," Lefler said.

Contractors also partitioned off portions of a wide-open foyer to create a reception area and a private consultation room, and added an outside building for storage.

The completion of the clinic benefits about 65,000 people, as the clinic is the largest in the area, according to Lefler.

"We see between 250 and 300 people a day," said Dr. Ahmed Ali Abdullah, direc-



Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler

Muhamad Saeed, Talifar Sector Chief of Public Health, discusses the needs of the newly-reopened Zumar Primary Health Clinic with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Surgeon, Lt. Col. Michael Place (left) and 2nd Brigade Combat Team Surgeon Maj. Don Sarmiento during the Aug. 26 opening.

tor of health clinic at Zumar. "We only had to close for five days for this work, but we are very patient. We waited for ten years for this work to be done (under the former Iraqi regime) and then the Americans came in and did this in one month."

In the span of two weeks, six local clinics reopened after being completely refurbished with funds disbursed by the 101st Airborne Division.

"Most clinics were looted after the fall of the regime," said Lt. Col. Michael Place, division surgeon. "They took everything: light fixtures, chairs, medications, exam tables."

There are nearly 120 clinics and some 20 hospitals in the Nineveh Province, and all of them have benefited from the disbursement of funds.

"Each had some work done, some were completely rebuilt," Place said.

According to Place, the repairs to the clinics leave a large impact on the individual communities, but are only part of the solution to a much larger problem.

"The rebuilding of the medical system is going to require the Iraqi people," Place said. "What we can give them is the tools to rebuild it. If you look at it realistically, a clinic is just a building. They have doctors who want to help people, and we are trying to give them a place where they can do that."

"This is a tool, just like the stethoscope is," Place said. "That is a tool I need to practice medicine, and the clinics are a tool they need to start building the system. We can give them that tool."

SANCHEZ, from Page 3

traveled to the Mosul Social Club, site of the May 5 interim government elections for the Nineveh Province.

At the social club, Sanchez and the leaders of the 101st along with Nineveh mayor Ghanim al-Basso, "met with Sunni leaders of the region,"

said Maj. Lawrence Wark, secretary of the general's staff, 101st Airborne Division, to discuss topics of importance to the province.

"Any time senior leaders meet with the Iraqi leaders, progress is made," Wark said. When the leaders of the coalition forces "engage the Iraqi leadership, it's a good thing."

After the two-hour meeting, Sanchez and the military entourage arrived at the Strike Tactical Operations Center, headquarters of 2nd Brigade, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), where Brig. Gen. Frank Helmick, assistant division commander (operations), 101st Airborne Division (Air

Assault) briefed Sanchez about the current situation in the city with fuel and electricity.

Following the brief, Petraeus concluded the visit by taking Sanchez on a short tour of sites in the city.

The newly refurbished city hall and the newly finished police station were points of interest on the tour.

Wannah selection an effort to democratize area

by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th PAD

Forty-six fiery Iraqis demanded a re-vote after forty-seven ballots were turned in last Wednesday at a city council/mayor selection for the city of Wannah, a small city of about 3,000 outside Mosul.

Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), proposed the extra ballot be removed. The suggestion did not go over well with the delegates, who claimed the additional ballot would be impossible to determine. Anderson conducted the selection, his ninth since the Army began its campaign to bring Iraq's

power into the hands of its citizens.

After the re-vote, an even 46 ballots were turned in, and six Wannah citizens became city councilmen.

A key goal of these selections is to bring an array of cultures and ethnicity into power, therefore balancing the government and keeping the Iraqi mind set neutral and open to different opinions, such goals being at the heart of democracy, according to Anderson.

"Each of these selections are run differently," Anderson said, "based on religion, ethnic groups, population."

However, the pains of democracy are seeping through the surface at these selections as tension among the delegates evolves into verbal hostility. More than once, Anderson found himself face-to-face with an argumentative delegate.

Nevertheless, by the end of the selection the sights and sounds in the streets of Wannah indicated a group of people overjoyed to finally have a voice in their futures.

"There was no government here before now; it was Saddam," said Maj. Pierre Gervais, intelligence officer, 2nd Bde. "This government will be in place until a firm Mosul government is in place. That could be the summer of 2004, or it could be later."

After the councilmen were elected, they were invited to meet the mayoral candidates before choosing one.

Mustafa Mohamad Alwarshan was chosen as Wannah's mayor. The six city council members are Muyassar Ali, Mohamad Younis, Mohamad Abbas, Yahya Sultan, Mohamad Shek and Mahmood Ahmad.

New Saddam 'Wanted for \$25M' poster released

Saddam Hussein "Wanted for \$25 million" posters and leaflets were distributed on the streets of Baghdad this week for the first time, as part of the ongoing drive to bring the brutal dictator to justice.

Teams of Iraqi police and Coalition soldiers will paste up two striking posters reminding potential informants that tip-offs leading to the arrest or proof of death of Saddam could net them a \$25 million reward.

One of the posters (graphics file attached) features a head-and-shoulders portrait of Saddam alongside portraits of his two sons Uday and Qusay, recently killed whilst trying to evade capture by Coalition troops.

Large 'X's partially obscure the faces of his sons.

Crucially, it was a tip-off that led troops directly to Uday and Qusay's hideout on July 22. A subsequent reward payout of \$30 million (\$15 million per son) was made.

Since May 1 when major combat operations ended, tip-offs have led to the arrests of numerous former Ba'athist regime loyalists, including three former Fedayeen just yesterday.

They have also led to the confiscation of large numbers of weapons, the foiling of terrorist plans and the prevention of sabotage.

A tip-off led to the recent seizure

of the Navstar I, a tanker ship smuggling almost 3,500 tons of diesel out of the country.

Police and soldiers touring Baghdad handed out leaflet-sized versions of the posters, as well as other leaflets offering rewards of up to \$10,000 for information about anti-Coalition activities or infrastructural sabotage.

The posters and leaflets will continue to be rolled out across Iraq in the coming fortnight.

Contributed by
The Office of Strategic
Communications,
Coalition Provisional Authority

(Right) The most recent wanted poster. (Below) A bumper sticker



Around the 101st

101st recovers large weapons cache

Elements of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) 1st Brigade Combat Team, assisted by the 326th Engineer Battalion, discovered a large cache site west of Qayyarah Aug. 24.

The 200-square meter site contained an as-yet undetermined number of rocket-propelled grenade rounds, 200 – 300 artillery rounds, and propellant charges.

The cache will be guarded by 101st elements until it is cleared. It was found when the 326th Engineers were clearing a smaller cache in the same vicinity.

Mosul Fire Dept. equipment purchased

In a continuing effort to rebuild the infrastructure of the city of Mosul, a contract has been signed to purchase \$60,000 worth of fire fighting equipment for Mosul Civil Defense.

The equipment includes flashlights, emergency light sets, hoses, fire fighting foam, protective masks, helmets, gloves and boots. The equipment is expected to be delivered by Sept. 18.

The purchase of the equipment furthers the ability of the people of Mosul to resume a normal life and gain control of their city structure.

Music hall funding sought

A project designed to rebuild the Mosul Music Hall is awaiting approval for funding.

The five-phase program, being handled by U.S. Army Engineers and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Band, calls for \$425,504 worth of renovations and construction. The first phase calls for clean-up of the existing structure, including basic architectural, sanitation and electrical repairs. The second phase would add false ceilings, acoustical wall cover-

ings, stage curtains, and HVAC duct work. Phase three would add four HVAC units. Phase four would add 1,200 theater style seats, and Phase five would add special lighting and a sound systems.

The 101st Band has performed several concerts in Mosul, and is coordinating with the Mosul Police Band for further concerts.

Mosul police receive new radios

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) recently purchased 49 hand-held radios for the Mosul Police Department.

The radios will be used to help the newly-trained police force communicate throughout the Nineveh Province.

Additionally, the 101st is helping the Iraqi Public Safety Office draft a contract for \$10 million in communications assets to go to ambulance services, fire departments, and the Ministry of Civil Defense, as well as other police officers.

The communications systems will help the Iraqi public safety organizations rebuild their infrastructure and will allow them to play a larger role in providing a safe and secure environment in Iraq.

101st: \$1,891,444 on reconstruction

As of Aug. 22, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) has spent \$1,891,444 on reconstruction in Iraq.

The division has funded 2,337 projects, designed to alleviate hardship and restore the quality of life to levels equal to or higher than pre-war levels. Projects ranged from major infrastructure repair to humanitarian programs, including road and bridge construction, power plant refurbishment, and returning medical clinics and schools.

Money for the projects comes from the Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Project program, which is funded

by monies seized from the former Iraqi regime. The money is returned to the Iraqi people in ways that benefit the entire community. Brigade commanders control the funds, and assess where their area of operations would most benefit from the expenditure.

101st thwarts counterfeiter in Mosul

Members of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) arrested a counterfeiter during an Aug. 22 raid in Mosul.

The counterfeiter was found producing sheets of 10,000 dinar bills (equivalent to \$10 bills). Equipment confiscated included rolls of white paper with water marks, rolls of magnetic security bands, three sheets of 10,000 dinar bills, a press machine, a computer with money software, and other counterfeiting equipment. The individual and the equipment were taken into custody.

The Division's 2nd Brigade, known as the "Strike" brigade, is responsible for the city of Mosul.

101st facilitates "Highway 1" repairs

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) continues to restore normalcy to Northern Iraq.

The Army has received quotes to repair approximately 100 kilometers (62.2 miles) of "Highway 1" from Mosul to Rabia. A contract is being sought to repair about 60 kilometers of two-lane road north of the village of Kasik to Rabia. The remaining 40 kilometers is an existing 4-lane highway. The road repairs will help facilitate travel and economy in and around the Rabia area.

(Editor's note: All content of 'Around the 101st' is contributed by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Public Affairs Office.)

COURTS, from Page 4

house itself was nearly left in ruins by looters. "We haven't stopped court ... in fact, we're increasing the pace."

"It's a Herculean effort," Whitaker said.

The local judges have also quickly adjusted to the recent overhaul of Iraqi jurisprudence by the CPA, according to Whitaker. With the fall of Saddam, coalition authorities instituted what amounts

to the Iraqi equivalent to America's Miranda rights, which gives accused persons the right to counsel and "the right to remain silent."

The Mosul Office of Judicial Operations has spearheaded efforts to teach local attorneys and judges the new laws protecting the rights of the accused.

"The hardest part is changing the mind set of all the players. That's what all this training is about, to teach them," Whitaker said.

HOPE, from Page 2

But I now know why those words elude me.

I can't find the words to say because they've already been said a million times in a million different forms.

I have now joined the hundreds of thousands of soldiers here in believing -- in knowing -- that freedom is the root of any and all hope.

Around Iraq

Marines help rebuild women's center providing relaxation

AD DIWANIYAH, Iraq -- The Marines carried shovels and sickles as they waded through the chest-high grass surrounding the dilapidated athletic building. When the building is finished it will become the city's new women's and youth center.

The center will be a place where women can come to relax or where mothers can drop off their children for a little while. There is a need for a women's center in Ad Diwaniyah because women make up nearly 60 percent of city's 260,000 inhabitants.

The Marines opted to leave their usual day's routine and traveled to the center to conduct a massive cleanup around the building, which had fallen into disrepair over the years. Large loads of rocks, bricks, broken glass and other large debris were hauled by bucket into the bed of a 7-ton truck to be taken to a nearby dump.

Weeds, grass, paper and smaller trash was loaded into another truck and carted to another location.

The work was sometimes backbreaking as Marines used shovels to scrape thick clots of dried mud caked on the edges of the floors near the building's walls. The volunteers wore surgical masks to protect themselves from the clouds of dust that filled the rooms while they were being swept clean.

Once the building is clean a contractor will renovate the building's interior, which should take another 30 to 45 days to complete.

The renovation will cost about \$99,000. Some of the upgrades include a new generator and a new air conditioning system.

A section of the building designated as the auditorium is also being renovated. Among other things, the large rectangular room will need new glass for the large windows that stretch the length of the room.

Future projects being considered include construction of a swimming pool and a sports complex on an adjoining piece of property.

Contributed by
U.S. Central Command
Headquarters

3rd ID returns from Iraq

by Sgt. Raymond Piper
Army News Service

FORT STEWART, Ga. -- Fort Stewart's commanding general said it felt good having the majority of the 3rd Infantry Division home from Iraq during a welcome home ceremony Aug. 22.

The 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) commander, Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, returned to Fort Stewart, Ga., with 197 soldiers.

The last of the division's equipment is being loaded onto ships and about 1,500 soldiers remain in Kuwait and should return to the United States within the next four or five days, Blount said.

Blount said he did not think that a deployment in the next 12 months would be in the future for the division. The focus will be on training and rotations for each of the division's four brigades to the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., in 2004.

"First, we have to get our equipment

out of storage and get it back into shape, and get back to training and focus on the NTC rotations for each brigade," Blount said.

The divisions' first homecoming was postponed because the fighting turned from open warfare to guerilla warfare and terrorist attacks, Blount said.

Members of the division have been redeploying for the past month. Prior to the redeployment the soldiers conducted peacekeeping actions in Al Fallujah, Iraq.

"We were helping to stabilize the situation in Iraq. Fallujah is a great example," Blount said. "The city was in great turmoil. When we left, it was fairly stable."

He added that the majority of the people in Iraq support the coalition and are trying to take control of their destinies.

"You have a small minority that are still fighting the inevitable," Blount said. "We have to take care of them, and we are making progress everyday."

(Editor's note: Sgt. Raymond Piper is a member of the 3rd Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office)

Program funding aids Iraqi people

by Staff Sgt. Ward Gros
American Forces Press Service

SOUTHERN IRAQ -- Helping Iraqis re-establish normalcy in cities that have survived two wars in 12 years isn't something that happens overnight.

Col. Lawrence Larsen, commander of the Army Reserve's 171st Area Support Group here, says he is beginning to see gradual improvements in the town of An Nasiriyah.

Improvements such as restoring electrical power for six hours a day have helped the entire city, Larsen said. A water treatment plant and sewage system, both on Larsen's wish list, would cost millions of dollars that are not immediately available. But making smaller, yet meaningful, improvements has become easier, thanks to the gen-

erosity of U.S. service members, their communities back home and the Commander's Emergency Response Program.

Larsen and other commanders can now request up to \$50,000 per project that would help stabilize Iraq through the program.

"We go through a grant-writing type of process where we identify the projects we could work on, the impact that these projects would have on the community, and cost," said Larsen, a reservist who in civilian life is a college biology professor in North Carolina.

Larsen is using the program to help three orphanages in An Nasiriyah. The Army Reserve's 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion sponsored orphanages for boys and girls ages 6 to 16, and another for younger children and

Around Iraq

Baghdad mom becomes prison guard

by Sgt. 1st Class Bill Sutherland
Army News Service

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- While many Iraqi women are hoping for a way to improve life in Baghdad, one found it. Ask 28-year-old Baghdad mother and resident Zahra Hadi about how her life has changed and she'll tell you about her new job.

She is the first female to wear the uniform of an Iraqi corrections guard -- the only female to wear any kind of police uniform.

Hadi completed a one-week corrections course at the Iraqi Public Service Academy, Aug. 14 and entered two weeks of on the job training with 33 other graduates.

"Not even Baghdad's police department has a female working with them, so this is a bit of history in the making," said Gary De Land, senior adviser to the Iraqi Corrections Service.

The training classes were held by Iraq's Coalition Provisional Authority Department of Prisons. Instructors from the 800th Military Police Brigade provided guidance in the training and curriculum, and assisted



HADI

fish and setting flower arrangements for weddings.

But when the Department of Prisons ran an ad looking for new prison guards, Hadi knew it was time for her dream of equality to come true.

"I've wanted to do this all my life. I always wanted equality with men. I like competing in a man's world," said Hadi. "I think I'm just as smart, and I can do most of those things men can do."

And now, she said smiling, "I can work as a corrections guard, and I know I will practice what I learned on how to be a professional and be treated with respect."

The high school graduate now wants to

in the selection process.

Hadi was a mother and housekeeper living in Baghdad. Her day consisted of house cleaning, caring for her 7-month-old son and preparing meals for her husband. She used to work part time selling tropical

study languages at the nearby Baghdad University. Her dream of one day going to a university is closer than before.

"I would love to learn how to work as a translator and learn French or English," Hadi said.

Her instructor at the academy was Master Sgt. Don Bowen.

"The students learn the code of conduct, human rights, how to respect others and self protection. Hadi is very enthusiastic about her work, and I truly feel she wants a change for her country," he said.

Candidates receive four uniforms and a salary of 100,000 dinars per month, or about 70 U.S. dollars.

"The pay for Iraqi workers is a good wage, since most earn half that much per month," Hadi said.

Army Reserve members who work as civilian correctional guards, bringing with them valuable information and experience, teach the core curriculum.

The group started training Aug. 8, at the Iraqi Public Service Academy, in Baghdad.

The Iraqi Public Service Academy's goal is to hire enough corrections guards to schedule a class for every three weeks. A new class started Aug. 16.

Myers tells vets U.S. making 'amazing difference' in Iraq

by Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- American service members are making "an amazing difference" in the lives of Iraqis, Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers said Aug. 25.

Speaking at the annual Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in San Antonio, the nation's top military leader said the deaths of Saddam Hussein's sons Uday and Qusay sent a message to the Iraqi people that America is not going to let a similar regime back in power.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told the veterans and their families that while major combat operations are over, the coalition is still on

the offensive in Iraq to root out the former regime loyalists. He said U.S. troops participate in more than 2,000 patrols "day and night" in Iraq. They have targeted "the Fedayeen Saddam, the Ba'athists, the criminals, as well as foreign fighters and jihadists and everyone else who wants freedom to fail in Iraq."

The chairman said he was encouraged by a recent visit to Iraq. He detailed how the coalition has recovered thousands of tons of munitions, including rocket-propelled grenades, surface-to-air missiles, mortars, rifles and other weapons. He said many of these weapons were stored in schools, hospitals and mosques.

"If you remember that deck of cards (designed by coalition forces to identify the 'most

wanted' members of Saddam Hussein's regime), we've now captured 42 of the 55 faces that were in that deck of cards," Myers said.

The death of Saddam's sons sent a particularly important signal to the Iraqi people. "That signal is that we will not let Saddam or his supporters bring back the reign of terror," he said. "The Iraqi people understood that. In fact, right after those two despicable people were killed, the number of Iraqis coming forward to report former regime loyalists and weapons caches increased dramatically. They frankly weren't afraid anymore."

Myers said Saddam Hussein left a horrible legacy to the Iraqi people: fear, corruption, a crippled economy and a badly deteriorated infrastructure. "In

a matter of just a few months, America's sons and daughters ... are making an amazing difference in the lives of this newly liberated land," he said.

Myers told the veterans more than 30,000 Iraqi policemen are working to establish law and order in Iraq, many of them being trained by U.S. forces with ethics as part of the training regimen. Hundreds of Iraqi courts are up and running, and U.S. military lawyers are advising the Iraqis on how to conduct fair trials.

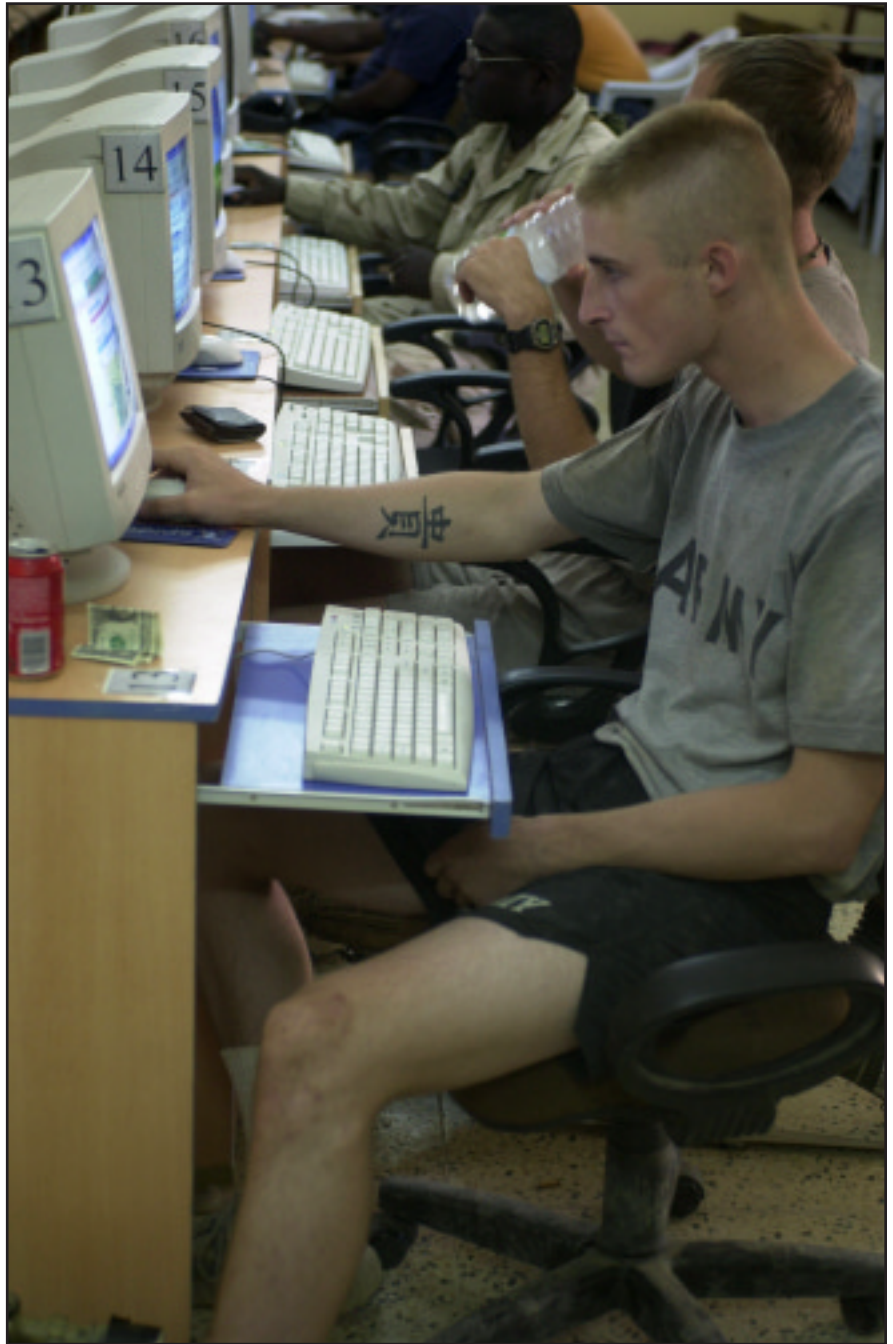
Most banks are operating, and the Iraqi Central Bank is now paying salaries to police, schoolteachers, hospital staff, petroleum workers and other key people.

"Our forces helped deliver

Camp of the Week: Q-West



(Right) Soldiers check e-mail and surf the net at the internet center, located inside "The Club" at Camp Q-West. (Above) Soldiers shop for everything from CDs and DVDs to snacks and hygiene items at the post exchange on Q-West. The PX is open every day except Tuesday. (Below left) "The Club," located down the street from the 1st Brigade Tactical Operations Center, provides soldiers with a variety of services such as a restaurant, convenience store and an internet center. (Below right) Soldiers line up for chow at the new dining facility provided by Brown and Root. The DFAC serves four meals per day, including midnight chow



Photos by Spc. Joshua M. Risner



MYERS, from Page 9

more than a million tons of food and thousands of tons of medical supplies," he said. "Of course, there are still many challenges and much room for improvement, but there is no food or medical crisis in Iraq despite dire predictions."

Almost all of Iraq's hospitals and clinics are treating patients. "Our forces are providing security for many of them and some, sadly, have lost their lives defending these medical facilities," he said.

Almost all the schools are open again. U.S. forces are helping to repair and rebuild many of the schoolhouses. "(The schools) are now being used for education instead of storing weapons, and education is not being taught with a Ba'athist agenda any more," Myers said.

U.S. troops are working to restore bridges, rebuild or dig wells, rescue homeless children from the streets and help at medical clinics. "There are more than 5,000 different projects that our troops

have done while at the same time they are trying to bring security to Iraq," Myers said. "Every day they go beyond what is asked of them to find new ways to make things better. Character and compassion ... are just as much a part of the American armed forces as courage and combat capability."

But international terrorists still are adapting to counter U.S. tactics. "They are still very shrewd, and they are still evil - as we witnessed less than a week ago with the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad and the bus bombing in Jerusalem," Myers said.

The Defense Department is working to examine the lessons learned and will configure the military to best fight the al Qaeda and other terror groups. "We owe it to our nation to stamp out this terrorist that is so contemptuous of the innocent both in America and abroad," he said. "We're as focused and committed as we can be, and there should be no doubt that we will not fail in our mission."

FUNDING, from Page 8

babies, in April. Before most of the civil affairs team left the area, Command Sgt. Maj. Bob Szakal of the 171st ASG took up the sponsorship for his unit.

"When the 402nd Civil Affairs asked for someone to take up (sponsorship of) the orphanages, I raised my hand," he said. "It's something that really tugs at my heartstrings."

Szakal, a Vietnam combat veteran, collected money from soldiers and bought stoves, refrigerators, fans, televisions and bed frames, all on the local economy. During his first visits to the orphanages, he brought a doctor to provide medical help and engineers to assess facility improvement projects. The engineers' appraisals for structural repairs will be submitted through the Emergency Response Program.

Szakal also wrote to family, friends and co-workers at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College in Salisbury, N.C., where he is a dean in civilian life, as well as to members of his church.

"People back home want to donate clothes and food," he said. "They really want to help." Szakal said he would like to see cupboards in the orphanages' kitchens, which lack shelves and storage space. Soldiers bought kitchen chairs and tables.

The frustrations and hardships of everyday life in An Nasiriyah -- a town where the Marines encountered some of the fiercest fighting during the initial combat of Operation Iraqi Freedom -- have affected the ASG's support program for the orphanages. Donated food was stolen from an outside storage room. Soldiers have since put bars on the windows and a lock on the door. Fans were installed to keep the room as cool as possible in 140-degree heat.

The Americans have helped, said the director of the orphanages, who gave her name simply as Amira. Szakal has been very good for the children, she said.

The 171st ASG has supported the orphanages for the past month, and even though significant progress has been made through initial purchases and a request for Emergency Response Program funds, Szakal said he would like to provide more.

"Right now I see a lot of trying," he said. "Our biggest success is letting them know that somebody cares. We want people to know that we are here to help and not fight. In a way, seeing the children smile helps me explain why I'm here."

(Staff Sgt. Ward Gros is assigned to the 171st Area Support Group in southern Iraq.)

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: What is bankruptcy? Will it help me or hurt my credit?

A: *Bankruptcy is legal protection from your creditors.*

Normally, a contract defines the duties and responsibilities between a borrower and a lender. Bankruptcy, however, can require a lender to accept a lower payment or eliminate the debt entirely.

Two different types of bankruptcy are available to individuals. The first is Chapter 7, often called a "straight" bankruptcy. Under Chapter 7, all nonexempt assets are applied to all debts, and the debts are eliminated. For example, \$5,000 in assets might be applied to \$30,000 in debts, and the other \$25,000 is cancelled.

The second is Chapter 13, often called a "reorganization" bankruptcy. Under Chapter 13, the court approves a 3-5 year repayment plan which the creditors must accept. Some people claim Chapter 13 is less damaging to your credit than Chapter 7, because debts are repaid and not discharged.

Bankruptcy can be expensive though, and not all debts can be discharged (such as child support arrangements). Consult with an attorney if you are having diffi-

culty paying your bills and you think bankruptcy is an option.

Q: Can I be punished for bankruptcy?

A: *Soldiers are required by AR 600-15 to pay their just debts, and can be punished under Article 134, UCMJ, for dishonorably failing to pay a debt.*

Soldiers cannot be punished for filing for bankruptcy, however. Bankruptcy is a perfectly legal proceeding, and soldiers cannot be prosecuted for seeking protection from their creditors.

Preventive law tip of the week:

Don't borrow more than you can repay. That sounds like common sense advice, but aside from extraordinary circumstances, bankruptcy only becomes a consideration when you have borrowed beyond your ability to repay.

So when it comes to consumer debt, avoid the temptation to take on a new line of credit or carry a large balance on an account. Some purchases such as houses or vehicles virtually require buying on credit, so reduce your borrowing elsewhere.

Man on the Street

What do you want to ask the new Army Chief of Staff ?



“Why are there not better opportunities for single soldiers out here.”

- Spc. Tasha Carr of Flint, Mich., Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)



“Why are we still here?”

- Spc. Daniel Conley of Henderson, Tenn., Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment

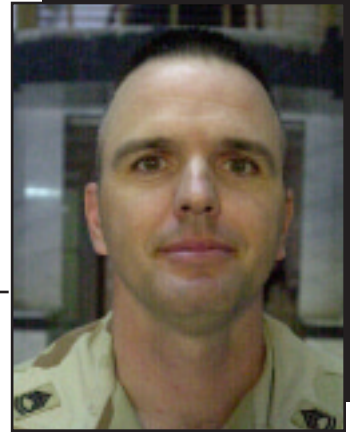
“When are they going to add two or three more divisions to the active duty Army?”

- Chap. (Lt. Col.) Chester Egert of Chesapeake, Va., 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division Chaplain



“I would ask him how long there will be a U.S. presence here in Iraq.”

- Sgt. First Class Keith Evans of Newark, Del., 37th Engineering Battalion (Fort Bragg, N.C.)



“When are we going home? That’s all that matters at this point.”

- Maj. Chris Lestochi of Allentown, Penn., 326th Engineering Battalion



“Why is the coalition primarily consisted of U.S. soldiers when the U.S. has several other obligations.”

- Staff Sgt. Fredrick Wallace of Rock Hill, S.C., 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-3 Office